

THE MARVELOUS MAGNET

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A SERMON
BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,

On an evening when the regular hearers left their seats to be occupied by strangers.

*“I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.
This He said, signifying what death He should die.”
John 12:32, 33.*

JESUS is the spokesman here. He tells of His own death by crucifixion, and of the result which will follow. It appears, then, that our Lord's power to draw all men to Himself lies mainly in His death. By being lifted up from the earth upon the cross He was made to die, and He also was made to draw all men unto Himself. There is an attractive power about our Lord's person, and about His life, and about His teaching. But, still, the main attractive force lies in His death upon the cross. Most certainly this is rare and strange, for when a great religious leader dies, a large measure of his personal power is gone. The charm of the man's manner, the impressiveness of his personal conviction, the lofty tone of his daily enthusiasm—these are immense helps to a cause while they are with us. To lose them is a fearful drawback such as makes it perilous for a religious leader to die. Men may remember a leader's life for a time after his death. They will do so most emphatically if he has been eminently good. We say of the righteous—“Even in their ashes live their usual fires.” From many a tomb there rises a silent voice more eloquent than the choicest speech, “He being dead yet speaks.” But there is a measure and boundary to the influence of a mere memory. How often it is the case that, after a little while, the leader having gone, the feeblers folk gradually drop away, the hypocritical openly desert, the lukewarm wander, and so the cause dies out. The man's successors desert his principles, or maintain them with but little life and energy, and therefore, what was once a hopeful effort expires like a dying taper. For a man's work to prosper it is not desirable that he should die. Is it not strange that what is so often fatal to the influence of other men is a gain to our Lord Jesus Christ? For it is by His death that He possesses His most powerful influence over the sons of men. Because Jesus died, He is this day the mightiest ruler of human minds, the great center to which all hearts are being drawn.

Remember, too, that our Lord Jesus Christ died by a most shameful death. We have come to use the cross as an ornament, and by some it is regarded as an object of reverence. But the cross, to speak very plainly, was to the ancients what the gallows are to us—an odious instrument of death for felons—exactly that and no more. The death on a cross was one never allotted to a Roman citizen except for certain heinous crimes. It was regarded as the death penalty of a slave. It was not only painful, it was disgraceful and shameful. And to say that a man was crucified was, in our Lord's time, exactly tantamount to saying in our speech today that he was hanged. It means just that, and you must accept the death of the cross with all the shame that can be connected with the gallows and the tree of death, or else you will not understand what it meant to Jesus and His disciples. Now, surely, if a man is hanged there is an end to his influence among men. When I was looking through all the Bible commentaries in the English language, I found one with a title page attributing it to Dr. Coke. But on further examination I perceived that it was the commentary of Dr. Dodd, who was executed for forgery. After He had been hanged, of course the publishers could not sell a commentary under his name, and so they engaged another learned doctor to take it under his wing. The man was hanged, and therefore, people would not read his book, and you are not at all surprised that it should be so. But here is an amazing thing. The Lord Jesus has lost no influence by having been hanged upon the cross. No, rather it is because of His shameful death that He is able to draw all men unto Himself. His glory rises from His humiliation, His adorable conquest from His shameful death. When He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” shame cast no shame upon His cause, but gilded it with glory. Christ's death of weakness threw no weakness into Christianity. Say rather that it is the right arm of her power. By the sign of suffering unto death, the

church has conquered and will conquer still. By a love which is strong as death, she has always been victorious, and must forever remain so. When she has not been ashamed to put the cross in the forefront, she has never had to be ashamed, for God has been with her, and Jesus has drawn all men to Himself. The crucified Christ has irresistible attractions. When HE stoops into the utmost suffering and scorn even the brutal must relent. A living Savior, men *may* love, but a crucified Savior they *must* love. If they perceive that He loved them, and gave Himself for them, their hearts are stolen away. The city of Mansoul is captured before the siege begins, when the Prince Emanuel uncovers the beauties of His dying love before the eyes of the rebellious ones.

Let us never be ashamed, dear friends, to preach Christ crucified—the Son of God lifted up to die among the condemned. Let those of us who teach in the Sunday school, or preach at the street corner, or in any other manner try to set forth the gospel, always keep a dying Christ to the front. Christ without the cross is no Christ at all. Never forget that He is the eternal God, but bind with that truth the fact that He was nailed to a Roman cross. It is on the tree He triumphed over Satan, and it is by the cross that He must triumph over the world. “I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die.”

The great truth of the text I have stated to you; let me enlarge thereon.

I. I shall try to speak first upon the ATTRACTIVE FORCE WHICH LIES IN A CRUCIFIED SAV-
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You will observe that it is briefly summed up in these words—*Himself to Himself*. “I will draw all men unto *Me*.” It is not written that Christ will draw all men to the visible church, for the universal profession of our holy faith is slow enough in coming. Certainly the Lord Jesus Christ will not lend Himself out to draw men to your sect or to mine. He will draw always towards truth and righteousness, but not to dead forms or meaningless distinctions, nor to the memories of former wrongs or party victories. If the Lord should draw men to the Cathedral or the Tabernacle, the Abbey or the Chapel, it would be of little service to them, unless in each case they found Him. The main thing that is needed is that they be drawn to Him, and none can draw them to Him but Him. Himself drawing them to Himself—this is the soul of the text.

I dare say that you have heard the oft-recounted story of the missionaries among the Greenlanders. Our Moravian brethren, full of fire and zeal and self-denial, went right away among the ignorant folk of Greenland, as those people then were, longing to convert them. Using large prudence, they thought, “These people are so unenlightened that it cannot be of any use to preach Jesus Christ to them at first. They do not even know that there is a God, so let us begin by teaching them the nature of the Deity, showing them right and wrong, proving to them the need of atonement for sin, and setting before them the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the wicked.” This was judged to be most fit preparatory work. Watch for the result! They went on for years, but had no converts. What was there in all that fine preparatory teaching that could convert anybody? Jesus was being locked out of the Greenlanders’ hearts by those who wanted Him to enter. But one day one of the missionaries happened to read to a poor Greenlander the story of Jesus bleeding on the cross and how God had sent His Son to die, “that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” And the Greenlander said, “Would you read me that again? What wonderful words! Did the Son of God die for us poor Greenlanders that we may live?” The missionary answered that it was even so, and clapping his hands, the simple native cried, “Why did you not tell us that before?” Ah, just so! Why not tell them this at once, and leave it to clear its own path? That is the point to begin with. Let us start with the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” To my mind that is the point to begin with and the point to go on with, yes that is the truth to conclude with, if there can ever be any conclusion to the grand old story of the incarnate God who loved His enemies, and gave Himself to die in their place, that they might live through Him. The gospel is Jesus drawing sinners to Himself that they might live through Him. Dear hearers, do you know what this means? I know that many of you do, and you are happy, for in this knowledge there is life. Would to God, that all knew this power of love in Christ; knew it so as to be drawn by almighty love to return that love with all their heart, and soul, and strength. The best thing that can happen to any of us is to feel Christ drawing him to Christ, and to find himself sweetly yielding to the gentle drawing of the Savior’s love.

The text says that Jesus Christ will draw all men unto Himself. Now, all men who hear of Jesus Christ at all are drawn, but they do not all yield. Some of them pull back, and the most awful thing that ever happens to a man is when he pulls back till Jesus lets him go. What a fall is that, when the drawing power is taken away, and the man fails backward into destruction which he himself has chosen, having refused eternal life, and resisted the Savior's power! Unhappy is the wretch who strives against his own salvation. Every man that hears the gospel feels some measure of its drawing power. I appeal to any one of you who has been accustomed to hear it. Does not Jesus sometimes tug hard at your conscience, and though you have pulled back, yet has He not drawn and drawn again? I remember how He drew *me* as a child, and though I drew back from Him, yet He never let me go till He drew me over the border line. Some of you must well remember how you were drawn by a mother's gentle words—by a teacher's earnest pleadings—by a father's admonitions—by a sister's tears—by a pastor's entreaties. Permit your memories to aid me. Bring up before your mind's eye the many dear ones who have broken their hearts to win you for Jesus. Yes, you have been drawn.

I suppose that all of you have felt a measure of that drawing. Why, it is not merely those that hear the gospel, but whole nations have been drawn, in other respects, by the all-pervading influence of Jesus and His love. At this instant the influence of Christianity is being felt in every corner of the earth to an extent which it is not easy to exaggerate. If I had an orator's power, I would picture my Savior casting golden chains of love over all nations, wherever the missionary goes preaching His name. The Lord is taming the nations as a man by degrees, subdues wild beasts. Jesus is gradually drawing the heathen to Himself. He has had a long tug at India. That dead weight still lies in the furrow. But it must come. It must yield. All those that watch it know that if there is any cause that makes progress in India, it is the cause of Christ. The East appears never to move, but if there is any move, it is Christward. Jesus is drawing China slowly. Japan is being drawn as in a net. Where the testimony of Christ has been borne, the idols begin to shake, and their priests confess that a change is coming. Every century sees a marked advance in the world's condition, and we shall progress at a quicker rate yet, when the church wakes up to a sense of her responsibility and the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the church to turn us all into missionaries, causing us all in some way or other to preach the gospel of Christ. Jesus is drawing, drawing, and drawing. When God meant to scatter the individuals of our race, they would not be scattered, they built a tower to be the center of union. And only by their tongues being so changed that they could not understand one another, could their resolve to remain in one company be defeated. But now, behold, the whole earth has the race of men to cover it. The sons of Adam dwell in every region, and it is the Father's will to gather together in one the redeemed of the Lord. Therefore He has set in their midst the great Shiloh, of whom it was prophesied of old, "To Him shall the gathering of the people be." The roaming races do not answer to the Father's call. They do not want to come to the elder Brother's rule, but they will have to come, for He must reign. Gentile and Jew, African and European—they shall all meet at the cross, the common center of our entire manhood, for Christ is lifted up, and He is drawing all men to Him.

But all men are not saved. No, for when drawn they do not come. Yet Christ crucified is drawing some men of all kinds and sorts to eternal life. When Jesus died on the cross it was not for my lord and lady only, nor was it only for the working man, it was for all sorts of people—

*"While grace is offered to the prince,
The poor may take their share.
No mortal has a just pretense
To perish in despair."*

He that is best taught and instructed has often been drawn to Jesus by the Lord's overpowering charms. Some of the most learned of men have been delighted to come to Christ. But the most illiterate and rude have equally been drawn by Jesus, and it has been their joy to come. I love to hear of the gospel being preached to the poorest of the poor, and so preached that it reaches those who never were reached by it before. Godspeed every effort by which Jesus is set before the fallen and degraded, so long as it is the gospel and not mere rant, we wish Godspeed to the most irregular of witnesses. Our fears begin only when Jesus is no longer in the front. We greatly need to have the gospel preached in the West of London, and so preached that our great ones may receive it, and find life through Jesus Christ. May such a movement soon take place. How I should like to hear of a converted duke telling out the gospel, or a re-

claimed knight of the garter proclaiming mercy for the chief of sinners! Why not? And blessed be God, the Savior, lifted up, draws all sorts of men to Himself—some of every kind, not the Jew alone, as at the first, but the Gentile too!—

*“None are excluded but those
Who do themselves exclude.
Welcome the learned and polite,
The ignorant and rude.”*

There is no exclusion of any class or creature from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. “I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me,” and the history of the church proves how true this is. The muster roll of the converted includes princes and paupers, peers and ale men.

But what is this force that attracts men to the crucified Savior? They do come. There is no doubt about it. Look, sirs, there is nothing in the world that men will hear so gladly as the gospel. How many years have I stood in this place to preach to a congregation precisely similar to the present! The crowds have been here as regularly as the hours, Sunday after Sunday, morning and evening, year after year. Suppose that I had been appointed to preach upon a scientific subject? Could I have gained or held such audiences? I should have been spun out a long while ago if I had been bound to draw upon myself for my matter. If I had preached any other than the doctrine of Christ crucified, I should years ago have scattered my audience to the winds of heaven. But the old theme is always new, always fresh, always attractive. Preach Jesus Christ. That is the recipe for catching men’s ears and laying hold upon men’s hearts. The name of Jesus is to man’s heart the most mighty of charms, man’s ears wait for it as the morning hour waits for the sun, or as the parched earth waits for the shower. Ring out the name of Jesus. It is the sweetest carol ever sung. Ring it out without fear or stint, for it is always welcome as the flowers in May. Men will never tire of it till the flowers are satiated with sunlight, and the grass grows weary of the dew. The music of that blessed silver bell rings out over hill and dale as sweetly as when, on the first Christmas night, the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” There is about Calvary and its infinite stoop of divine love a power that never dies out, and never will while the world stands. What is it? From where does this universal attractiveness come?

Well, first, it is the force of *love*, for Jesus Christ is incarnate love. In Him you see one who divested Himself of all His glory, that He might save the guilty—who came down upon earth, not seeking wealth and fame, but simply seeking to do good by saving men—who, having laid aside His honor and His glory, at last laid aside His life, and all for love, for love which met a sad return, for love which has however, saved its objectives with a great salvation. One of the school men says that, whenever we know that another person loves us, we cannot help giving back a measure of love in return, and I believe that the statement is true. Certainly, such love as the love of Christ, when it is told out simply, and men can understand it, is certain to excite an interest, to win a degree of attention, and so to lead up to better things. Full often this love proves its power over observers by transforming them from enemies into friends, and though they at first despised the Redeemer, His love compels them, at length, to believe and to adore. If I were asked the secret of the attracting power of the crucified Savior, I would answer that it is invincible love. The only crime that ever could be laid to Jesus’ charge was that of which the poet sings—“found guilty of excessive love”—loving beyond all reason, and beyond all bounds—loving as none ever loved before. So that if all the rivers of human love ran together they could not fill such another ocean of love as was in the heart of Jesus the Savior. This it is—this unique, unrivaled love—which draws men to Jesus. The pierced heart of Christ is a loadstone to draw all other hearts.

No doubt there is also this about the crucified Savior—that He draws men by *the wonderful rest which His death provides for men*. The most earnest Christian man must sometimes have his doubts as to whether all is right with him. The more sincere a man is the more does he tremble lest he should deceive himself. You, good brother, have your personal anxieties; certainly I have mine. But when I turn my eyes to Jesus upon the cross and view the crown of thorns, the sacred head, the eyes that were red with weeping, the hands nailed fast to the wood, and the feet dripping with gore. And when I remember that this shameful death was endured for love of me, I am so quiet and so happy in my spirit that I cannot tell how peacefully my life-floods flow. God *must* forgive my grievous fault, for my Redeemer has so grievously answered for it. When I see Jesus die I perceive that from now on divine justice is on the sinner’s side. How can the Lord God punish the same offense twice—first the Substitute and then the

men for whom that Substitute has bled? Christ has bled as substitute for every man that believes in Him—therefore is every believer safe. Oh, brethren, when you are troubled, rest with us, by looking to Calvary. And if the first glance does not quiet you, look, and look, and look again, for every grief will die where Jesus died. Not to Bethlehem, where the stars of Christmas burn, do we look for our greatest comfort, but to that place where the sun was darkened at midday, and the face of eternal love was veiled. Because the Lord of life and glory was dying *in silemis*, suffering the most deadly pain for our sakes, therefore His wounds distilled the richest balm that ever healed a sinner's wound. Men know this. Reading their Bibles, they soon find it out. There is no comfort for them against the anger of God, and against their guilty consciences, until they see Christ in their place, suffering for them. The conscience sees with unspeakable delight the victim provided. She gladly lays her hand on Jesus' head, and sees her sin transferred to Him, and punished in Him, and thus it finds rest, like the rest of God. In the expiatory death of Jesus the law is vindicated, and God is "just, and yet the justifier of him that believes." Dear friends, believe me, Jesus bestows the peerless pearl of perfect rest on every heart that comes to Him. He fills the soul so that it has no more longings. You know the horseshoe magnet, and you have seen how rapidly it picks up pieces of iron. Have you ever put a piece of iron right across the two ends of the magnet? You will then have noticed that it ceases to attract anything else. The magnetic circuit is completed, and the magnet rests perfectly quiet, refusing to go beyond its own circle of pure content. When my soul is filled with Jesus He completes the circuit of my soul's passions and longings. He is all my salvation and all my desire. Have you found it so? Has not your soul come to an absolutely perfect rest when it has gotten to Christ? When He Himself has drawn you to Himself, have you not entered into rest? Because men perceive that such a rest is to be had therefore they come to Christ. He Himself uses this as an argument why they should come. Remember His cheering words, "Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This is part of the attractive force which dwells in the crucified Savior.

Then I am sure that there is a great attraction about Christ, when we see *the change which He works in men*. Have you known a drunk become a Christian, or a thief become upright? Have you seen a harlot made chaste? Have you marked any of the modern miracles which are always going on around us in the form of conversions? If you have taken pleasure in these signs and wonders, I know that you have said, "Lord, I, too, will come to You to be converted." The sight of His power to elevate and sanctify has attracted you to Jesus, and you have fallen at His feet. There is no true, deep, tender, living conversion except through the cross, and therefore those that are taught of God do love to come to Christ, that sin may be conquered in them, that the heart of stone may be taken away, that the heart of flesh may be given, and that they may walk the happy way of holiness, according to the example of their adorable Master.

I could continue thus to show what this attractive force is, but, lest I should weary you, I will only say that it lies much in *His sufferings themselves*. Is it not a strange thing that suffering attracts? Yes, more, lowly suffering conquers. She sits as a queen upon her throne, and reigns by the royalty of her resignation. The ship of the church has plowed its way through seas of blood. With the blood-red cross at the masthead, she has pushed on even in the night, throwing the crimson spray about her. She has never paused because of persecution, affliction, or death. These are the rough winds which fill her sails. No progress is surer than that which comes of holy suffering. The enemies of the church have taken her disciples and burned them, but their deaths yielded a sweet savor of life. It is questionable if a man's influence can be better promoted than by sending him aloft in a chariot of fire. What made us a Protestant nation for so many years? I do not say that we are Protestant now, but what made us enthusiastically Anti-papist for so many years? The stakes of Smithfield did it. Men and women stood and saw the martyrs burned, and as they saw them die, they said, "These men are right, and the cause for which they burn is true." And into the very heart of England martyrdom cast up a way for the Lord Jesus, and He entered then and there into Old England's secret soul. What the martyrs did in their measure, by their bitter death-pangs, is being done on a divine scale by the sufferings of the chief of all martyrs and head of all witnesses. By the agonies of Jesus men's affections are moved and their hearts enthralled.

Are any of you unconverted, and do you wish to be converted? I cannot suggest a better exercise than to read over the story of the death of Christ, as it is told by the four Evangelists. When you have read it once, read it again. And as you read it say, "Lord, I must have a sadly hard heart, or else this would move me to tears. I pray You, change my heart." Then read the story again, for sure at last it will

touch you. God the Holy Spirit blessing you, it will move you, and you will be among the “all men” that shall be drawn to Jesus by His own personal force

So much, then, about what this force is.

II. Very briefly, my second head is to be—HOW IS THIS FORCE EXERCISED?

This force is exercised through the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who puts power into the truth about Christ. And then men feel that truth and come to Christ and live. But our blessed Lord and Master, *uses instruments*. The force of Christ’s love is sometimes shown to men by those who already love Him. One Christian makes many. One believer leads others to faith. To come back to my metaphor of a magnet, you have sometimes seen a battery attached to a coil, and then, if you take a nail and put it on the coil, the nail has become a strong magnet. You notice that the nail turns into a magnet, for you take another nail, and you put it on the end of it and it holds the second nail fast. Now number two is turned into a magnet. Try it. Put a third nail upon it. See, it is held fast! Number three has become a magnet. Try the next nail, it holds on to it like grim death, and now number four has become a magnet. Bring another nail within the influence. Number five has become a magnet. And so it continues. On and on and on, the magnetism goes, from one nail to another. But now just go to your battery, and detach one of your wires, and the nails drop off directly, for the coil has ceased to be a magnet, and the nails have ceased to be magnets too. All the magnetism comes from the first place from which it started, and when it ceases at the fountainhead there is an end of it altogether. Indeed, Jesus Christ is the great attractive magnet, and all must begin and end with Him. When Jesus lays hold upon us we get hold of a brother, and before long he turns into a magnet also. Thus from one to another the mystic influence proceeds, but the whole of the force abides in Jesus. More and more the kingdom grows, “ever mighty to prevail,” but all the growing and the prevailing come out of Him. So it is that Jesus works—first by Himself, and then by all who are in Him. May the Lord make us all magnets for Himself. Jesus says, “I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me,” but He leaves room in His figure for the co-working of all grateful hearts.

Jesus draws men *gradually*. Some are brought to Christ in a moment, but many are drawn by slow degrees. The sun in some parts of the world rises above the horizon in a single instant. But in our own country, at this season of the year, it is beautiful to watch the dawn, from the first gray light to the actual break of day. Is it dark, or is it light? Well, it is not quite dark, it is visible darkness. By-and-by there is light. No sun is up as yet, but yet the light increases till the East begins to glow, and the West reflects the radiance. Then, by-and-by, up rises the great king of day. So does the Lord bring many to Himself by gentle degrees. They cannot tell when they were converted, but they are converted, for they have come to Christ. Rest assured that He will not send you back. Do not say, “I am not converted, for I do not know the moment of the great change.” I knew an old lady once who did not know her birthday, but I never told her that she was not born because of that, for there she was. And if you do not know when you were made a Christian, yet, if you are a Christian, it little matters how. If you are really born of God, the date of your new birth is interesting to curiosity but not important to piety. Salvation is often accomplished by a lengthened process. I have heard that when they wanted to bridge a great chasm they shot across the river an arrow or a bullet which drew with it a tiny thread. That was all the communication from bank to bank, and the rolling torrent was far below. Despise not the day of small things! The insignificant beginning was prophetic of grand results. By means of that little thread they drew across a piece of twine, and when they had safely grasped it on the other side, they bound a small rope to the end of the twine, and then they drew the rope across. And then to that rope they tied a cable, and they drew the cable across, and now over that chasm there strides an iron bridge, along which the steam horse rattles with his mighty load. So does Jesus unite us to Himself. He may employ at first an insignificant thread of thought, then a sense of pleasant interest, then some deeper feeling, then a crushing emotion, then a faint faith, then stronger faith, then stronger yet, until, at last, we come to be firmly bound to Christ. Oh, be thankful if you have only a thread of communication between you and Jesus, for it will lead to more. Something more hopeful will be drawn across the gulf before long; at least I hunger to see it. Christ’s attractions are often very gradually revealed, and their victorious energy is not felt all at once.

Moreover, the cords of our Lord’s drawings are very *secret*. You see the swallows twittering round our roofs, hawking in the air, shooting up into the clouds, or flashing by our ear. It is summer, and they are paying us their annual visit. They will be with us for a time, but all of a sudden we will see them getting together about the gable of an old house, holding agitated congregations, and evidently discussing

matters of importance. The Lord of birds is gently drawing every swallow in England down towards the African coast, and they will all go, without exception, as the secret summons reaches the flying host. They know but little of the way, but their flight is not therefore delayed or its course left to uncertainty. Over thousands of miles of sea and land they pursue their course until they come to their resting place. And then, next spring, the same power that drew them southward will draw them all northward again. And here they will come, and we shall hear their joyous twitter, and say to ourselves, "Summer is coming, for here are the swallows again." By a secret power of that order does Jesus draw home the strangers and the foreigners whom His grace has chosen. They say to one another, "Come, and let us go up to the house of the Lord. Let us seek the face of the Savior." The mystic attractions of the power of Christ are secretly drawing many who knew Him not, and now they ask their way to Zion with their faces Christ-ward. Look how the sun draws along the planets. He hastens on in his mighty career in space—I know not where, but drawing with him all the worlds which compose the solar system. All these silently attend his majestic marches. Such is Christ, the great central sun, all His people follow, for He draws. Stand by the seashore and notice what the moon can do. You do not even see her, for it is high noon, but here comes a wave, and then another, and then another, and the tide rises a little higher today than it did yesterday. What is it that causes this pulse of life, these heart-throbs of the deep? The moon's attractive power is drawing up the waters from the sea. Even so our glorious Christ, in ways unknown to us, draws the hearts of men by His mighty Spirit wherever He pleases, "I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

Fail not to observe *how gently* He does it! The classic heathen adored a goddess whom they represented as riding in a chariot drawn by doves. Surely the most tender mode of impulse—power without force, motion born of emotion! Certain of us were wafted to Jesus by some such zephyr. We could not but yield, the softness and tenderness of every touch of Jesus affected us infinitely more than force could possibly have done. Hearts are tender things, and are not to be forced open with crowbars. The doors of the heart open gently to Him that holds the key, and who is that but He who made the heart, and bought it with His precious blood? The gentleness is equal to the power when Jesus draws men to Himself!

But, oh, how *effectually*! I thought, as I mused upon my text, that I saw a great whirlpool like the maelstrom in the north of Norway. I thought I saw an enormous whirlpool so huge that all the souls of men, like ships of many different forms, were being drawn towards it. With strained sight I gazed upon this monstrous death! Woe to those who are sucked in by that dreadful whirlpool, for there is no escape. The abyss has no bottom; destruction is sure to all who are caught in the tremendous down-rush! Even ships far out at sea on other tacks, though they escape this maelstrom, are hindered in their course by it, for this one monstrous devourer labors to absorb all and leaves no bay, nor harbor, nor foreign main unaffected by its perpetual draught. As I was thinking of this giant evil, and wondering how I could navigate my own boat so as to avoid this mouth of hell, I saw a hand that had the mark of a nail upon its palm, and lo, it held a mighty magnet which attracted every vessel with a force greater than any born of sea or storm. This magnet attracted many ships so that they flew to it at once, and were gently drawn towards their desired haven in the very teeth of the maelstrom. I saw other vessels in which the mariners hoisted sail to try to escape the influence of this magnet, and even put out their oars to strive to get away, and some of them did so escape. Alas, they floated farther and farther into the maelstrom's destructive power, to be sucked down to their perdition. These were so besotted that they labored against mercy and resolved to be destroyed. We are glad that all are not left to act so madly.

You must have seen an instance of drawing very often down in the river. A grand vessel is bound for the Indies, but how can it be taken down to the Nore? It is difficult to move the heavy craft. There it must lie. But here comes a steam-tug. The large vessel hands a rope on board the tug and now the steam is up. Tug, tug, tug, the paddle-wheels revolve and the big ship begins to follow the lead. It is no longer motionless; it will soon be walking the waters as a thing of life. A pleasant sight—the tug draws it gently out to sea and then leaves it to pursue its distant voyage. Just so may Jesus draw you away from sinful pleasures and from self-righteousness.

III. I shall conclude by drawing one or two lessons. Then I have done. **WHAT DOES ALL THIS IMPLY?** "I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

Well, it means this first—that *men, by nature, are a long way off from Christ*. You were not born converted. Of that I am sure. Nor were you born a Christian either, and though they took you to the font,

and said that they made you a “member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,” there was not a word of truth in it, for you were such a child of God that you loved sin, and such a member of Christ that you knew nothing of Him, and such an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven that, unless God saves you, you will never get there. I may say of Christians who are made in that way, “Eyes have they, but they see not. Mouths have they, but they speak not, neither speak they through their throats.” And I fear that I must add, “They that make them are like unto them: so is everyone that trusts in them.” It is a poor Christianity that is created by such monstrous folly. “You must be born again,” and you must be born again of the Spirit of God, or you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Man is a long way off from Christ, and Christ must draw Him. Friend, ask Him to draw you.

I gather another lesson—that *men will not come to Christ unless He draws them*. Sometimes, when I am trying to prepare a sermon to preach, I say to myself, “Why must I take all this trouble?” If men were in their senses they would run to Christ without calling. Why must we put this business so temptingly? Why must we plead? Why must we be so earnest? Because men do not want to come, not even to their own Savior. They do not wish to have their sins forgiven. They do not wish to be renewed in heart. And they never will come—no, not one mother’s son of them—unless He that sent Christ to them shall draw them to Christ. A work of grace in the heart is absolutely necessary before the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus will be accepted by any one of us. Jesus said, “You will not come to Me that you might have life.” What our Lord said is true to this hour, man has not improved an atom.

But, then, learn another lesson. If there is any man here that Christ is drawing, he need not ask, “May I come?” Of course you may, if you feel drawn to come. Are you coming? Come, and welcome. Christ never yet turned away a soul that came to Him—not one. “Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.” If He is drawing you, run, for you have Scriptural warrant for so doing. “Draw us: we will run after You.” If tonight you feel any kind of tugging at your heartstrings, do not hesitate a moment. Come along with you. When God draws, then, is your time to move. What do the sailors say? “There’s a breeze, Jack. Aye, aye, boys, up with the anchor, now for every stitch of canvas, we can make headway now.” Do you feel any kind of breeze? Is the breath of the Holy Spirit moving upon you in any degree? Do you feel inclined to say, “I will go to Jesus”? Then, fly away with you, like a full-sailed ship before a fair wind. And by God’s help may you soon make the port of everlasting salvation.

Let us finish up by saying that, if Christ has said that He will draw, then, He will draw tonight. The attractions of the Lord Jesus are continual. He draws, and He will always draw. He is drawing now. Do not pull back, lest His drawing should cease, and you should perish, but rather let your heart sing—

*“He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the force divine.”*

Oh Spirit of God, draw men to Jesus. This is the way of salvation, trust Christ and you are saved. Rely wholly upon what Christ is, and what He has done, and you are saved. In that very act there is a change effected within you which will show itself forever in your character, for he that believes in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born again. The faith which looks to Jesus and the life which lives upon Jesus come together. I cannot tell you which is first—the new birth, or faith. Can you tell me which spoke of a wheel moves first? No. And these are spokes of one and the same wheel. “He that believes in Him has everlasting life.” Oh, believe Him! Trust Him. Lay hold upon Him. Accept Him and go your way, and the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Amen. So let it be!

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